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PENSION DECLARATION OF MAJOR THOMAS MASSIE.

[Thomas Massie, son of William Massie of New Kent County, born August 22, 1747, is stated by *Heitman* to have been Captain 6th Virginia, March 11, 1776, Major 11th Virginia, February 20th, 1778, transferred to 2d Virginia, September 14, 1778, resigned June 25th, 1779. About 1780 he removed from New Kent County to Frederick, and thence about 1803, to Amherst (now Nelson) County. He married Sarah Cocke, of "Bremo," Henrico County, and died at his residence, "Level Green," February 2, 1834. He had three sons who have many descendants. One of them was the lamented Judge Thornton L. Massie. For an account of Major Massie's descendants see *The William and Mary Quarterly* XV, 125-129. Unfortunately the first page of the copy of the declaration, sent to this Society a number of years ago, has been lost.]

burg and the country between York and James Rivers, against the depredations of Lord Dunmore and his myrmidons. Within the ensuing Fall, he received a captain's commission to recruit a company of Regular soldiers to serve in the 6th Va. Reg. of the line on continental establishment. His Company, being recruited at the commencement of the following Spring, he marched it to Williamsburg, and united with the said 6th Regt., then under command of Cols. Buckner and Elliot, and Major Hendricks. All the companies were nearly complete, some he believes, quite so, viz.,—Capt. Samuel Cabell, Lieutenants Barrett and Taliaferro, and Ensign Jordan; Capt. Ruffin, two lieutenants and ensign; Capt. Johnson, two lieutenants and ensign; Capt. Hopkins, ditto; Capt. Garland, ditto; Capt. Cocke, ditto; Capt. Oliver Towles (a celebrated lawyer) and company officers; Capt. Gregory, ditto. He believes Capt. Worsham, or Dun and Avery. Also himself (Capt. Massie), Lieutenants Hockaday and Epperson, and Ensign Armistead. The companies were raised in different and distant parts of the state and he had not even personal acquaintance with many of them, which, together with the length of time, renders it difficult for him to remember every officer's name. After the Regiment was equipped and armed, it marched out and camped in the vicinity of Williamsburg where it entered

into camp and military training; whence his regiment was ordered to march to the North. Within the summer following this was done under the command of Col. Buckner, and Major Hendricks (Lieu-Col. Elliot having withdrawn). Capt. Ruffin died and he believes another officer, and several resigned or withdrew. The regiment marched through Virginia by way of Fredericksburg and the Northern Neck, through the upper part of Maryland into Pennsylvania by way of Lancaster, leaving Philadelphia to the right, crossed the Delaware River above Trenton, and passed through Jersey to Perth Amboy, where the regiment was posted to defend that point and the country around until further orders. Gen. Washington at that time having the greater part of the main American army on Long and York Islands, soon after the defeat of that army on those islands, he with his said Regiment was to march up the Sound by way of Newark. The storm and capture of Fort Montgomery taking place, he met with Gen. Putnam at Newark, and marched up the North River as high as Fort Lee. The defeated army had crossed the Hudson, except a part that had marched on the east side of that river under the command of Gen. Chas. Lee. He, the said Thomas Massie, fell in the rear of those retreating troops who had been appointed to cover their retreat and marched the upper road by Springfield, Scotch Plains, &c. to New Brunswick, on the Raritan River, where the troops to which he was attached were attacked by the British van. Having destroyed a part of the bridge, the said American troops kept up a hot fire with their artillery and small arms, with the British the whole day. This checked the progress so much as to enable Gen. Washington to cross the Delaware River with the retreating army, military stores &c. The troops to which he was attached (being unincumbered) also had the good fortune to cross the Delaware without much loss. Gen. Washington having refreshed the troops and received reinforcements recrossed the Delaware in the night of the 24th of December (he thinks), surprised and defeated a large body of Hessians, posted at Trenton, captured about 900 of their number, and crossed the River again with them. Several days subsequent, Gen. Washington, having received reinforcements, again crossed the Delaware River with his army and took post at Princeton.

He, the said Massie, was for the two succeeding years generally employed on detached or particular service, consequently was seldom with the said Sixth Regiment or his company, which company was by this time much reduced. On the 1st day of January, 1777 he marched under the command of Gen. Scott (who headed a considerable body of troops) on or about the Princeton road and encamped in the evening on the Heights above Maiden-head. Soon after the van of an army under the command of Lord Cornwallis appeared, followed by the main body, said to amount to 12,000 men, and encamped in the place for the night. By dawn of the next day the enemy were in motion and filed off in columns to the American left, apparently to surround them. The Americans discharged two light field pieces of artillery at them, without return, and retreated down the road to a creek, which they crossed over a bridge and destroyed the same, and took possession of the ground on the Trenton side of the creek, then covered with large forest trees. Gen. Hard at that time, being above with a large corps of Western Pennsylvania riflemen, the Americans kept the enemy at bay for several hours (he believes) before he could effect the passage of the creek with his large and heavy artillery. The Americans retreated up and slowly along the road to the summit of a hill also covered with forest trees. Here Gen. Washington, accompanied by Gen. Gréen with reinforcements, come up. Here the Americans also skirmished (a considerable time) with the enemy before they retreated, and ultimately retreated to a long hill perhaps a mile to the west end of Trenton in view of the main American Army. Here they formed and awaited the attack of the enemy. The day being now very far spent, the enemy appeared and approached the Americans in columns. As they were displaying we gave them a fire in single file from right to left, and retreated under a heavy fire of musketry and artillery, and formed under the protection of the main army in Trenton. A very heavy cannonade ensued directly between the two armies that lasted until after dark and has been called the cannonade of Trenton. Gen. Washington, having fortunately gained a grand point in eluding Cornwallis' intention of bringing him into a general

action, made up large fires in front and left those who had been in the van during the day to keep them up. He immediately marched with his army, and taking the Princeton road, reached that place early the next morning, defeated Col. Mahood, who Lord Cornwallis had left there with troops to defend the place and its stores. Gen. Washington, having taken off those stores &c., proceeded down the road by Kingston and Somerset Court House to Morristown, where he established posts on the Raritan in Jersey, viz., at Perth Amboy, Bonnontown and Brunswick. Gen. Washington also established a line of posts opposite to them with a view of preventing the British garrisons from having intercourse with and marauding the country. He, the said Massie, was placed on this duty at Middle Post, Natuchen, under the command of Col. Hendricks, and served on it near five months. This duty was extremely severe by night as well as by day, constant patrolling, frequent skirmishes, some of them very bloody nocturnal surprises, the cutting off of pickets etc., always attended with loss of men, and great fatigue. The British called in their posts about the first of June and the American Posts were evacuated about the middle of June. He, with the other officers &c. who had been in this line of duty joined the main army at Middlebrook. Sometime after, he and five other officers were sent to Virginia with instructions. He, on his return, joined the army under Gen. Washington at the White Marsh Hills. Shortly after, Gen. Morgan returned with troops from the capture of Burgoyne's army. Our army then marched into winter quarters by way of the gulf to Valley Forge. He was soon detailed on duty under Gen. Morgan, who was to take post at Radnor about half way between Valley Forge and the mouth of the Schuylkill River, with a view to cutting off the communication of the enemy from that part of the country which was effected. About this time (Feb. 1778) he was promoted to the rank of Major. In the Spring he commanded a large guard low in the lines not far above Philadelphia. Here he received Lord Cathcart, Aide to Gen. Clinton, with a flag of truce and dispatches for Congress. Agreeably to orders, he, Cathcart, was not permitted to proceed further. The dispatches were read and delivered to Gen. Morgan. Im-

mediately after, Gen. Clinton evacuated Philadelphia. He (Massie) marched under Gen. Morgan, through the city, proceeded up and crossed the river, and united with the main army. He with Major Gibbs was detailed to attend Gen. Morgan, who was appointed to command the light troops etc., to interrupt and endeavor to retard the march of the British army through Jersey to Sandy Hook. The first attempt to retard their march was made at Allentown. This stopped them a day and some prisoners were taken. The second attempt was a complete surprise, from thick shrubbery in the pines, where 16 to 18 prisoners were brought off and a few killed with little loss to the Americans. Several other attempts were made to alarm and retard their march which succeeded so far as to enable Gen. Washington to march with his main army by Englishtown and obtain a position which gave him the power of bringing Gen. Clinton to a general engagement, in which it is believed he would have been entirely successful except for the flagrant disobedience of orders by Gen. Chas. Lee, who commanded the van of the American Army. On that, the 28th day of June, 1778 (an intense hot day) Gen. Washington ordered Gen. Lee to attack in full force. This, the said Massie, knows to be the fact, the orders having been communicated verbally by Gen. Washington through him, (the said Massie) the evening before. On Gen. Lee's approach the British army drew up in order of battle. Gen Lee ordered a retreat which was done under a slow retreating fire for some-time. Gen. Lee repeatedly sent orders to the officers commanding the several flanking corps not to advance and engage. This state of things continued until Gen. Washington came into the field himself, took the command, arrested Gen. Lee, and renewed the battle by bringing the troops into action. The battle at Monmouth Court House was a bloody and hard fought action. After the sunset the British army gave way, and it being too dark for pursuit, the American Army lay on the field for the night, with a view to renew the battle the next day; but the British Army in the night, made a silent and rapid retreat, leaving their dead and wounded. Gen. Morgan, under whose command he, the said Massie still acted, was

ordered to pursue the British early next morning, but they could not be overtaken except two or three hundred stragglers that were captured. Pursuit was continued to Middleton Heights immediately above Sandy Hook. After being there and thereabout for several days, the troops marched up by Sposwood to Brunswick, bridge on the Raritan River. Here we had a *feu de joie* in honor of the victory of Monmouth. From thence he marched to King's Ferry on the Hudson river, and crossed to the White Plains in New York. Here he remained several weeks. From there, he, with several other officers, was ordered to Rhode Island to assist Gen. Sullivan at the siege of Newport, then in the possession of the British. A violent storm, however, with rain, etc. for several days having driven Count D'Estrey's fleet from the mouth of the harbour out to sea, rendered it impracticable for Gen. Sullivan to proceed with the siege; he consequently retired from the island and the said Massie with the other officers detached as above stated returned and rejoined their respective regiments then encamped on the Hudson some distance above West Point, and on the opposite side.

Soon after this, the surprise and capture of Baylor's newly raised regiment of calvalry near Heroington, happened, when he with his regiment marched under the command of Gens. Woodford and Morgan with their troops to that neighborhood and took post on the strong heights of Paramus. By this time a large British force (said to amount to 6,000) under the command of Lord Cornwallis had taken the possession of the town of Hackensack, with a view of foraging the country, in which they did not succeed to much extend, owing to the vigilance of the American troops in attacking and repulsing their foraging parties. In a few weeks the British army returned to New York and the said Massie with his regiment under the command of Col. Febiger was posted at Hackensack. Soon after this, Col. Febiger was called off, and the said Massie was left in the sole command of the Regiment. This was the second Virginia Regiment on continental establishment. The officers were, Captains Taylor, Parker, Calmes, Catlett, Stokes, Kennon, Gill, etc., etc., as well as recollected at the distant date

He continued there until after the middle of December, when he with his command pursuant to orders marched into winter quarters at Boundbrook, on the north side of Raritan River (under the command of Gen. Lord Sterling, who commanded that division of the army) where he continued quietly for a considerable time. The British were confined to New York and its environs and employed in arranging and strengthening their posts of defense. Their embarkation of troops to our Southern States and other occurrences demonstrated the intention of moving the main seat of war there, with a view to attempt the subjugation of those states. Time progressing, it was known that Congress had determined to defend and save Charleston, if possible, and that the eight old Virginia Regiments were doomed to that service. Those (8) Regiments were then so much reduced in number that they were consolidated into (?) Regiments (March, 1780). The officers whose commissions bore the highest rank, of course, took the command. The said Massie was of consequence a supernumerary officer, and, with Gen. Washington's permission, returned to Virginia, holding his commission (which he at this time has) ready and subject to duty with other supernumerary officers whenever called on or required.

He ranked as Major on the 20th February, 1778, but did not take his commission from the war office (not having leisure to call for it) until the 20th March, 1779. His commission as captain was literally worn and rubbed out in his pocket while on duty from the constant exposure to rain, hail and snow day and night. He acted alternately under the commands of Gens. Scott, Weedon, Sullivan, Morgan, Woodford, Gen. Lord Sterling &c., &c. He was afterwards under the command of Gen. Nelson as Aidencamp in the winter of 1780 and 1781, when Arnold invaded Virginia and destroyed the public stores and houses at Richmond and Arsenal and foundry etc., etc., at Westdam and was finally at the siege of Yorktown, and the surrender of that Post with the British Army, in October, 1781.

After the ratification of the treaty of peace, he received five thousand, three hundred and thirty-three and a third acres of land in the states of Ohio and Kentucky (the patents for

which he now has) in consideration of his services as Major aforesaid. He likewise received some three per cent and six per cent certificates, not worth much at the time, afterwards sold, amount not recollected. He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension (saving and excepting his right to half pay up to 1831, the claim to which he intends prosecuting before Congress) and he declares that his name is not on the pension roll of any Agency in any state.

(Signed) Thomas Massie, Sen'r.

Sworn and subscribed the
day and year aforesaid.

(Signed) Jno. P. Cobbs.

And the undersigned Justice of the Peace before whom the foregoing declaration is sworn to and subscribed, doth hereby declare it as his opinion that the above named applicant was a Revolutionary officer, and served as he states. It is moreover certified that the said applicant from age and bodily infirmity is unable to attend the Court of the County in order to make his declaration, not having been there (at the Court House) for many years.

Given under my hand and seal this day and year first above written.

(Signed) Jno P. Cobbs. (Seal.)

Justice of the Peace.

State of Virginia,

Nelson County towit:

In testimony that the above John P. Cobbs, before whom the foregoing declaration was made and sworn to, is and was at the time of making the same a duly and lawfully commissioned magistrate of the County of Nelson and the State of Virginia, and authorized to administer oaths, take acknowledgements, etc., and furthermore that his name subscribed to the foregoing declaration appears to be his usual signature, I have hereunto affixed my seal of office and subscribed my name, and qualify as clerk of the County Court of Nelson in the State of Virginia, at Lovingson, the Court House of the said County of Nelson, this 16th day of Feb. 1833.

(Seal)

Spottswood Garland.

Virginia towit:

I, John Floyd, Governor of the state aforesaid, do hereby certify and make known to all whom it may concern that Spottswood Garland, whose name is subscribed to the annexed certificate under the seal of the County Court of Nelson, was at the time of subscribing the same, Clerk of the said County Court of Nelson, in the State of Virginia, duly appointed and qualified according to law. And to all his official acts as such full faith, credit and authority are had and ought to be given.

In testimony whereof I have subscribed my name and caused the great seal of the state to be affixed hereunto. Done at the City of Richmond the 20th day of February in the year of our Lord, one thousand, eight hundred and thirty-three, and of the Commonwealth of the fifty-seventh.

(Signed) John Floyd.

(Seal)

By the Governor.

(Signed) Wm. A. Richardson,

Sec'y. Com'th.

And Keeper of the Seal.